



Police Department

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Jeff LeDuff
Chief of Police

September 15, 2005

Honorable Kevin Martin
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

IB Docket No. 05-221

Dear Chairman Martin:

Hurricane Katrina has demonstrated that our public safety communications systems are susceptible to widespread failure. In every case of widespread failure of our land-based communications system, another form of communications is always available: satellite. However, very expensive user handsets and high service fees make today's satellite systems prohibitively costly for public safety agencies. Following Hurricane Katrina several private companies were in the Gulf Coast area using satellite phones due to outages of land-based communications. This caused a saturation of available satellite signals making the system nearly unusable.

In my capacity as Chief of Police, I think it is imperative that we facilitate a cost-effective, secure, widespread, and reliable public safety network. In order to overcome the high cost typically associated with mobile satellite systems, we are looking forward to the availability of advanced integrated satellite/terrestrial systems. A hybrid network will allow a cell phone user to use a cell phone on existing cell towers or to use a satellite network if the cell phone network is inoperative.

Hurricane Katrina has taught public safety that without adequate and reliable communications, rumors, chaos and confusion will rule. Life and death decisions have to be made based on reliable (and confirmable) information. Without an adequate and functioning communications system in a disaster, mitigation and recovery is hampered and can be a major contributing factor to loss of life and property.

As you move forward with the distribution of spectrum, I urge the Commission to allocate 20 MHz of 2 GHz MSS spectrum on a *pro rata* basis to TMI/TerreStar Networks Inc., and ICO Satellite Services respectively. This communications solution would have helped to provide the defense needed during Hurricane Katrina and could be the last line of defense for any emergencies that could arise, natural or otherwise, in a cost effective and secure manner.

Sincerely,


Jeff LeDuff

Cc: Commissioner Abernathy
Commissioner Adelstein
Commissioner Copps
Secretary of the Commission